

A TRIBUTE TO THE LATE HONORABLE JAMES JARRELL PICKLE

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 23, 2005

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay tribute to my good friend, J.J. Pickle. Those of us who have the tremendous honor of serving in this great institution sometimes fail to see the giants that serve among us. Certainly J.J. Pickle was one of those giants.

He was born in Big Spring, Texas on October 11, 1913 and was educated in the public schools. He was a man who was clearly a leader, not only of the people of the State of Texas, of the district that he represented in the central part of Texas, but of this entire Nation.

He was a man who gave his heart, literally, to this country. He poured hours after hours into trying to grapple with the important issues we faced as a Nation, and he did it because he loved this country. He was truly a public servant who cared about the people in the State of Texas, and cared about the people in this great country.

It is rare that we see people in this institution who worked as hard as J.J. Pickle. However, in doing so, he was always able to retain his touch of the common man. As much as he accomplished academically and through the higher ranks of government in this country, he never lost the ability to relate to people on a day-to-day level. To me he will always be Jake, the fellow who would put his arm around you, smile and joke, and ask how things were going. He was a man who cared about you as an individual and cared about people.

He loved high-powered debates with intellectuals, but he never put on airs. He was one of only seven southern representatives to vote for the 1964 Civil Rights Act legislation. He believed that his most significant accomplishment as a lawmaker was the 1983 Social Security reform bill, which he helped pass as chairman of the Social Security subcommittee. That legislation eased Social Security's financial problems by raising the age for full benefits from 65 to 67 in the year 2000. He could talk to farmers and mechanics as easily as Presidents such as from his mentor, President Johnson and other leaders. It is no wonder the voters of Central Texas kept Jake in Congress for 31 years. They knew a good man when they saw him. They, and all Americans, have lost someone very special.

HONORING CW4 THOMAS W. GERRISH

HON. JEB BRADLEY

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 23, 2005

Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor CW4 Thomas Gerrish for his 27 years of service in the U.S. Army Reserves.

CW4 Gerrish was born and raised in a family with a long history of military service. His

father and grandfather served in the Navy for 20 and 30 years, respectively, and his two sons are both currently serving in the U.S. Army, with one presently on the ground in Iraq. It is evident that this strong commitment to serving one's country has made a profound impact on CW4 Gerrish's life and career path, and his own impressive record of military service reflects just that.

CW4 Gerrish enlisted in the U.S. Army Reserves in 1977. CW4 Gerrish decided to enroll in flight school, where he received his aeronautical rating as a U.S. Army Aviator and promotion to Warrant Officer in 1982. He was deployed to Southeast Asia to participate in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in 1989, and in 1992, he attended and graduated from the CH-47 Maintenance Manager's/Maintenance Test Pilot's Course. As an Aircraft Component Repair Platoon Leader, CW4 Gerrish was responsible for overseeing 23 soldiers, six allied shops and equipment valued at over \$10 million. Later, he served as Maintenance Platoon Leader and his hard work was largely the motivating factor behind his company earning the best OR rating in the Battalion.

Before retiring from military service, CW4 Gerrish coordinated aircraft maintenance prior to deployment for Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom. His last assignment was to serve as the Senior Warrant Officer to the Cargo Helicopter Project Manager's Office. During this assignment, CW4 Gerrish was responsible for fleet management and customer support for all CH-47 units and 461 H-47 helicopters. His leadership and technical abilities were instrumental in maintaining aircraft at the highest state of readiness and motivating and inspiring the soldiers under his command.

During the course of his service, CW4 Gerrish has been awarded 24 medals and honors, including the Bronze Star and the Legion of Merit. His long and varied career exemplifies his broad experience and growth. CW4 Gerrish has proven that hard work, dedication and a strong work ethic will achieve great things in one's career, and his impeccable record classifies him as a truly outstanding soldier. He has served his state and country valiantly and I know he will continue to do great things in his retirement. It is truly an honor to recognize his accomplishments today, and I thank him for his service.

HONORING PRESIDENT GORDON B. HINCKLEY

HON. JIM MATHESON

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 23, 2005

Mr. MATHESON. Mr. Chairman, this week marks the 95th birthday of Gordon Bitner Hinckley, the 15th President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Gordon B. Hinckley was born on June 23, 1910 to Bryant and Ada Hinckley in Salt Lake City, Utah. The day Hinckley was born, a can of Campbell's soup cost 10 cents, a man's shirt was less than \$1 and beef sold for 30 cents a pound in Salt Lake City.

Growing up in Salt Lake City, young Gordon spent summers on the family fruit farm in the

rural Salt Lake Valley. He and his brother Sherman often slept out under the stars in the box of an old farm wagon where they lay on their backs, picking out familiar stars. They also weeded and irrigated the family garden, looked after livestock, and dug fence post holes. In 1923, when President Warren G. Harding visited SLC, Gordon and his siblings helped line the streets to wave flags as the President's motorcade came into town.

In 1928, just a year before the onset of the Depression, Gordon Hinckley enrolled at the University of Utah thinking he might become an architect. But he loved English literature, particularly Shakespeare, and he decided to go into journalism instead.

From 1933 to the summer of 1935, he served as a missionary for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the British Isles. In addition to the hard work of proselytizing, he led efforts there to improve relations with the press, published articles, and wrote eloquent letters home.

Upon returning to Utah, he accepted a job as executive secretary of the newly formed Church Radio, Publicity and Mission Literature Committee. In this capacity he led the public relations and media efforts of the Church, grasping and utilizing new electronic media to modernize the delivery of the Church of Jesus Christ's message.

He married the late Majorie Pay on April 29, 1937 and together they had 5 children and 25 grandchildren.

By the time he became President of the Church on March 13, 1995, he had labored nearly 60 years at Church headquarters—38 years of service as a General Authority and 15 of those in the First Presidency.

During the last 10 years, President Hinckley has traveled extensively throughout the world meeting with dignitaries and members of the Church. Through these meetings, he has reinforced his statement that, "Good homes produce good people. Good homes become the foundation for the strength of any nation." In writing and speaking, he has encouraged church membership and others to strengthen their homes and families and cultivate virtues such as love, honesty, civility, mercy, industry, and gratitude.

As the leader of the ninth largest religion in the United States, he has overseen significant international building efforts, worldwide expansion of church membership, and has been noted for his openness to the press. He has endeared himself to Church members and others he meets with attributes developed in his earlier years: hard work, an ease with language, a dry wit, and a genuine love for people.

In addition to Church service, President Hinckley has been active in community affairs, receiving numerous honors, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2004.

He wrote, "My plea is that we stop seeking out the storms and enjoy more fully the sunlight. I am suggesting that as we go through life, we 'accentuate the positive.' I am asking that we look a little deeper for the good." President Hinckley has embodied this positive attitude throughout his 95 years and shared it vigorously during his last 10.

I hope that my colleagues will join me in wishing a very happy 95th birthday to this great man and leader.